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BADAGAS.

[facing p. 73]

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

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BADAGA GIRLS.

[facing p. 75]

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

624 the Parpattikāran to be present on the occasion of the Kannikattu (pregnancy) ceremony.

•291 000 A quarter of a century ago, a Badaga could be at once picked out from the other tribes of the Nīlgiris by his wearing a turban. But, in the present advanced age, not only does the Toda sometimes appear in the national head-dress, but even Irulas and Kurumbas, who only a short time ago were buried in the jungles, living like pigs and bears on roots, honey and other forest produce, turn up on Sundays in the Kotagiri bazar, clad in

291 turban and coat of English cut. And, as the less civilised tribes don the turban, so the college student abandons this picturesque form of head-gear in favour of the less becoming and less washable porkpie cap, while the Badaga men and youths glory in a knitted night-cap of flaring red or orange hue. The body of the Badaga man is covered by a long body-cloth, sometimes with red and blue stripes, wrapped "so loosely that, as a man works in the fields, he is obliged to stop between every few strokes of his hoe, to gather up his cloth, and throw

301 one end over his shoulder." Male adornment is limited to gold ear-rings of a special pattern made by Kotas or goldsmiths, a silver waist-thread, silver bangle on the

291 wrist, and silver, copper, or brass rings. The women wear a white body-cloth, a white under-cloth tied round the chest, tightly wrapped square across the breasts, and reaching to the knees, and a white cloth worn like a cap

304 on the head. As types of female jewelry and tattooing, the following examples may be cited :—

1. Tattooed on forehead with dashes, circles and crescent; spot on chin; double row of dots on each upper arm over deltoid; and devices and double row of

| 301 dots on right forearm. Gold ornament in left nostril. Necklets of glass beads and silver links with four-anna

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
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BADAGAS MAKING FIRE.

[facing p. 99]

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

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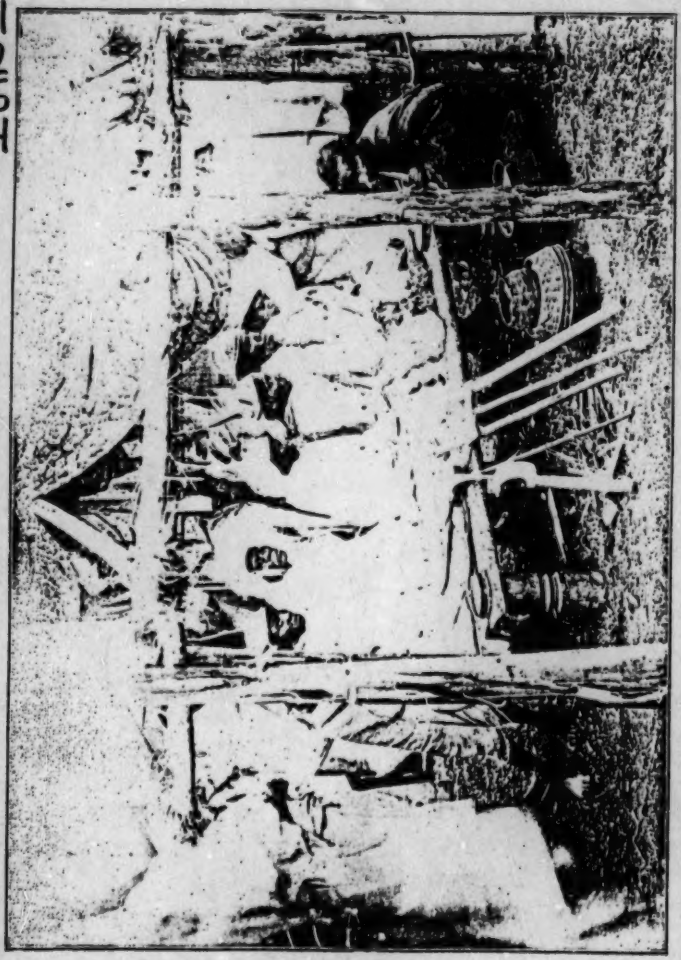

BADAGA FUNERAL CAR WITH THE CORPSE.

[facing p. 117]

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

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BADAGA FUNERAL CAR.

[Facing p. 1197

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

(651) cash wage (Grigg, 1880, 34, 471; see above, pp. 149, 152).
(654) Greatly increased contact with markets and with Europeans
(434) provided the impetus towards full participation in the cash economy, yet this transition took a century to complete. For the
178 vast majority the basic requirements of food, goods and services
[177] continued to be provided either by their own efforts or by their Toda, Kota and Kurumba associates. The itinerant Chetti trader continued to make monthly visits, as he still does. From 1825 onwards Badagas could visit local markets on the plateau for what they had previously bought in Guṇḍulupe:te and Ka:ramuḍu, but they never sold very much in the markets and thus rarely had
(442) spare cash to spend. In the early days of cash-crop farming very few Badagas had enough knowledge or personal contacts to arrange the bulk sale of their produce in a distant market. They used to sell their crops instead to a broker in the Nilgiris, until it became known that a farmer who could find a market and negotiate a sale by himself would make bigger profits. An important motivation was the desire to acquire consumer goods that were now becoming available on a scale and in a variety
(342) never before known to the Badagas. Later in the nineteenth century there is evidence of increasing affluence which found expression in the shift from thatched to tiled rooves. '... in 1871 only 1,914 houses out of the 13,922 in the district were tiled; whereas now [1908] tiles are the rule ... in Badaga villages' (Francis, 1908, 130, compare Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 58;
(432) Grigg, 1880, 29, 225; 'Geofry', 1881, 132). For the farming family engaged in marketing their crops, cash was necessarily the only medium of exchange, and much of their foodstuffs had to be
(291) bought in the town bazaar. A great variety of items was also being purchased, the most obvious of which were new clothes: in the 1890s men first began to sport European-style shirts and jackets, and in the 1930s women started to wear coloured *sa:ris* (B.E.M.S., 1897, no. 58, 90; Hockings, 1979a).

We may say that their commitment to the cash economy was complete by about 1930, in which year most Badagas permanently severed their traditional exchange relationship with the Kotas. This from the Badaga point of view was an advantageous move, for it allowed them to buy pottery, ropes and metal goods in the bazaar at a lower price than the Kotas commanded, and without delays. While the Kotas had not been receiving cash, the traditional dole of grain they were given at each harvest was becoming

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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Pl. 3

[following p. 248-C]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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Pl. 4

[following p. 248-D]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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Pl. 5

[following p. 248-E]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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Pl. 6

[following p. 248-F]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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Pl. 10

[following p 248-J]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Pl. 13

[following p.248-0]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Plate Section

361 Plate 1 A typical Badaga hamlet (Dimbaṭṭi), above the valley floor but sheltered by a hill from the south-west monsoons. Note the strips of land running downhill. The well in the foreground is new.

342 Plate 2 Typical work-space (ke:ri) in front of houses in Ka:ṭe:ri. The two-story house is a twentieth-century innovation. The poles carry electricity to most houses.

● 291 Plate 3 A Toda couple, both wearing embroidered shawls (pu:txuḷy).

301 643 Plate 4 Pāda Rāja Gowder, paramount chief of the Badagas since 1956, and headman of Tu:ne:ri. His gold earrings are of a traditional design.

302 877 Plate 5 Two schoolgirls carrying their lunch. O:ranaṛi hamlet. Both have an auspicious mark on the brow.

302 759 Plate 6 Sithamma, grandmother of the girls in Plate 5; she lived in O:ranayi, was a traditional Lingayat, and a noted herbal therapist. Her gold ornaments are traditional.

000 Plate 7 Kumba:ras in Kempola hamlet, here enshrouded in mist.

177 764 Plate 8 Kotas from Kolmel playing for Lingayats dancing during a funeral at the neighbouring hamlet of O:ranayi, 1963. Women do not dance in public.

243 231 Plate 9 Cattle threshing grain on a work-space in O:ranayi. The hired labourers are non-Badagas.

476 291 Plate 10 Women's work-group outside a house in Ki:ṛkunda village. All wear sarees in place of the traditional dress.

778 782 Plate 11 The Goddess Hette with bell, a wreathed *linga*, and a tray with plantain and half-coconut offerings, decorating a Lingayat temple in Ka:ṭe:ri.

623 632 Plate 12 Council of elders at Ke:ti village. The commune headman is on the extreme left, in white.

[p. 25]

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hair to fall out. Some young girls use razors instead of this. The traditional method, still followed by some old women, is to rub wood ash into the pubes for one or two minutes and then pull each hair out separately. There was a wild plant that was dried for a few years, then burnt; and its ashes caused the hair to fall out as they were rubbed onto the body. The reason for removing the hair is that it can harbour ticks.

Before contact with the British, Badaga men shaved with the help of knives made by the Kotas. A potful of water served as a mirror. Later they began to shave themselves with broken bottle glass; and now razors can be bought in the bazaar. There are no professional barbers among the Badagas; but friends do sometimes shave each other. Poor men might shave rich men (but not *vice versa*), for which service they would receive some grain. A great indignity for the very poorest was to shave the pubes of other men for remuneration. Even today one may hear a person being abused with the words, "What can you do? You can't even shave my pubes!" Men regularly remove this hair for the same reason that women do.

Today Badaga men patronize barbers in the towns, but among elders one may still occasionally see the traditional haircut. The hair on top of the head should grow long, and this lock is then tied in a bun (*kotti*) at the back of the head. The sides are cropped short. A moustache gives dignity, and should only be shaved off for the funeral of a very close relative. Priests and headmen should not shave at all. Other matters of hygiene are discussed in the following chapter.

Clothing and Adornment[2]

2.14. It is generally said that before they left Mysore the Badaga women wore *sa:ris* — several meters of cloth draped around the body — and men wore *do:tis* — shorter lengths wrapped around them as loincloths. These at least are the traditional clothes of men and women in the Indian plains, now worn with such extras as blouses, shirts, underwear and shoes. But only in the twentieth century have the Badagas reverted to this plainsman style of dress, and that in combination with certain European influences too.

According to legend the later settlers fled to the Hills in the seven-

[2]Sections 2.14-2.17 are adapted from my longer article, "Badaga Apparel: Protection and Symbol," in *The Fabrics of Culture* (ed. Justine M. Cordwell and Ronald A. Schwarz), pp. 143-174. See bibliography for details.

teenth century because they were being pursued by Muslim soldiers who wanted to marry Badaga girls (some of whom were unusually fair and attractive). To avoid such a dishonour befalling a Hindu family these refugees adopted a style of feminine dress that was seemingly copied from that of the low-status Kota tribe, and also tattooed the woman's brow (Benbow 1930: 1-3; Karl 1945: 1; Kariabettan 1958: 6). This was not the only change in costume to be stimulated by the Muslims, however; it is said of Tippu Sultan that, "seeing a Lingayat woman selling curds in the streets without a body-cloth, he ordered the cutting off of her breasts. As a result of which act the wearing of long garments came into use among the whole female population of Mysore" (Thurston 1903:191). Word of this change in fashion, and of the fanatic prudery of Tippu, undoubtedly reached the Badagas (some 10 per cent of whom were Lingayats too). Yet they may have begun covering the breasts even before this gruesome event, simply on account of the cold weather at 5,000-8,000 feet.

2.15. For at least the past two centuries the dress of Badaga women has consisted essentially of three cloths. One is a triangular head-cloth tied across the brow and behind the ears, and falling down behind over the hair and neck. It is worn by all married women. A second cloth is a loincloth folded over double, wrapped around the waist and falling to a few inches below the knees. Their dress is completed with the third cloth, half the size of the loincloth, which passes over the breasts but under the arms, and reaches to the waist: this cloth is kept in position by two red bands, two inches wide, one (*oḍekaṇṇi* or *sate*) passing over the upper chest and under the arms, the other (*puka:su*) going round the waist. Both are tied tightly, leaving the shoulders bare and creating a baggy effect in front below the bosom. One scurrilous folktale of the Todas has it that the Badagas are descended from a marriage with a female black langur, and that their women therefore have to carry a supply of leaves under these baggy upper cloths for their food supply! The cloths are nowadays of white cotton, although one occasionally sees a sky-blue head-dress, and 40 years ago red ones were in fashion. A woman's adornment is traditionally complete if she has a small tattoo in the middle of her brow, a gold ring in one nostril, a pair of large gold earrings, and a gold chain round the neck to indicate her married status. Heavy brass bangles formerly adorned the upper arm, while bracelets and toerings of silver are still common (Ward

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1821: lxxii; Shortt 1868: 60; Rhiem 1900: 508-09; Francis 1908: 130; Thurston 1909: 81; Tignous 1911: 116; Benbow 1930: 13-15; Verghese 1963: 419).

In the nineteen-thirties a small number, who had been to high school or who had cultural contacts with Tamilian women from the plains of Madras, started giving up this traditional white dress for multi-coloured *sa:ris*. Today only the older Badaga women can be seen in traditional dress. In the nineteen-forties high school girls began wearing jackets. Today at the English-language private schools in the Nilgiris one occasionally meets Badaga girls in full English school uniform, including a short skirt; and the word "miniskirt" has actually passed into the Badaga language, even though the article has never been seen in their villages. Since 1950 blouses covering the upper arms and shoulders have become popular. Another innovation is underwear: since the nineteen-fifties all young women have worn brassieres, and underpants are worn by all schoolgirls.

2.16. The basic dress of the men is a loincloth (*muṇḍu*) worn over a breechclout that is kept in place by a string around the waist; the doubled-over loincloth reaches to the ankle, but is commonly pulled up to the knees. A cloak or blanket is wrapped around the upper part of the body, and a turban of cotton or silk sits loosely around the head. Traditionally no footwear was worn, for fear of offending the diety they walked upon; but in the nineteenth century men began wearing leather boots and sandals which had been purchased locally. Men's shoes came into use early in the present century. A distinctive pair of gold earrings, perhaps a silver finger-ring, and an umbrella or walking-stick complete the men's apparel. The elaborately embroidered cloak (*pugaru si:le* in Baḍagu) of the Todas is also favoured by older men, and is virtually a mark of office for village headmen. At the turn of this century men started wearing European-style jackets and trousers; but before that they had adopted shirts, which hang outside the loincloth; Kashmir shawls in red, orange, green or blue wool have also been popular with the men since the 1920s. "Pork-pie" caps, coloured nightcaps, and "Gandhi" caps have likewise been fashionable alternatives to the turban for some time. By mid-century the pubic cloth was giving way to cotton shorts or Western-style underpants, except among older men. (Ward 1821: lxxii; Shortt 1868: 60; Grigg 1880: 220: Francis 1908; 130; Thurston 1909: 81; Tignous 1911: 116; Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 247.)

2.17. This account of Badaga appearance will not be complete

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without some further notes on body ornaments. Men as well as women usually wear gold earrings, which are still made from melted gold sovereigns. Women also have gold nose-rings, always worn in the left nostril. Gold, silver or brass armlets may be worn by women just above the right elbow. Numerous silver, gold or glass bangles will be on the wrists; men too wore a silver bangle and silver or copper toe-rings until 50 years ago. Silver or steel rings are worn on the fingers of both sexes (Thurston 1909: 81-82). Necklaces of great variety are also favoured by girls. In general, where gold ornaments are too costly women wear them in filagree silver, brass, copper, iron or steel instead (Grigg 1880: 220). Badagas believe that if a person wears gold, the length of his lifetime will be greater. One might think that wearing gold invited theft; but in fact it seems that this did not often occur amongst the Badagas. Throughout the nineteenth century men, when travelling from village to village, carried a walking-staff with a small axe-head in lieu of the handle, for protection. When however they were to walk to the plains on a trading expedition (prior to 1825) they would first divest themselves of all ornaments, including even their silver waist-bands and any richly made cloak. They were clearly very afraid of brigands, even though they travelled in a group of up to 100 men.

This still does not complete the list of ornaments, however. Priests wear a silver ring during each festival. Some of the headmen wear gold or silver "rings of office" on their fingers, given to their ancestors by East India Company officials or even earlier chieftains of Mysore. The headman of Ke:ti wears one called *sinaganige*, which his ancestor seems to have taken from another Badaga headman after a hand-to-hand fight. It is now worshipped in his home every Monday. Such rings can always be given as security against a fine, and are conventionally worth 1,000 rupees in gold coins. Women who go barefoot — still the great majority today — wear silver rings on three or four toes of each foot. (In Southern India slippers are associated mainly with Muslim women and Hindu dancing girls.)

Until about 1930, it was the custom for men to carry non-collapsible umbrellas made of palm leaves on a cane frame. (Such umbrellas can still be seen in Kerala occasionally.) Since the Nilgiri Plateau is very wet for a part of the year (roughly 20 ins. in May-July, and another 30 ins. the rest of the year), these or their more recent Western equivalents often substitute for a walking stick. Until very recently it was thought disrespectful to the men for women to carry

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path between the priest's home and the temple, or go beyond the territorial boundary of her own village. She must not collect dry firewood, lest she become barren. She must not face the village priest; so that when he starts out from his home for the temple he shouts "hu:hu:" (or rings a handbell if it is a Lingayat village) as a warning to *all* menstruating women to hide themselves. The girl must cook her own food while she is in seclusion, and cannot be supplied with it already cooked from her own home. Instead, every household in the village should give the girl a small amount of rice, chili, salt, pulse, millet flour or vegetables. Such gifts are not to be returned later in equal measurs.

3.12. A girl's first seclusion is for no fixed period. She can re-enter her home only on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday, but it must be either the first day after the new moon or else whichever of these three days falls most closely before the full moon. Although this is the Badaga custom, today one out of five girls would instead go to the nearest town and, in Tamilian fashion, consult an astrologer as to the most auspicious day for re-entering the house. On that day she bathes outside the house, puts on a set of totally new clothes, and cuts her nails with a small knife. Along with the other new clothes she is given the traditional headcloth, which she ties over her head before entering the home or which is replaced by the end of a *sa:ri* held over her head, if she has adopted that mode of dress (Hockings 1979a). Only after sunset, when she can see stars, does the girl cross the threshold, doing so with the right, auspicious foot first. It is reported that she used to be led up to the threshold by five elderly women (Francis 1908: 131). Once inside she goes to the doorway that joins the two main rooms, kneels down, and touches her head to the floor. By this gesture she acknowledges that the further room, the *ogamane*, is a sacred place which she will never pollute by her menses. As the girl bows down, older people in that house say a prayer. She then stands and bows her head to the hand of the oldest person in the house, and then to all other relatives present. Next, accompanied by another girl of similar age such as a sister, she goes round the village and bows in the same manner to all people older than herself. On that occasion each household must offer her something to eat as a symbol of their mutual kinship. Generally the girl is given milk, but in a large village she may only taste a drop of that milk because she could not drink so much. And although the village may be large, the bowing cannot be postponed

and all sleep in a vacant house, or one where only a widow lives, or one with a newborn baby (and hence no possibility of adult sexual activity at night). If a group is sleeping in such a house children of the opposite sex are not allowed in it.

5.20. In the last century children might only wash once a month, and be really dirty the rest of the time. Now they are washed every evening, and after reaching five years they do this for themselves. In the morning they only wash the face and clean the teeth with charcoal and a twig. Until about 1930 girls below five wore no undergarments but were simply wrapped in a loincloth. Even above that age boys and girls from very poor families continued to dress like that. Now both boys and girls wear vests and underpants from an early age. I will not offer further details on their dress here, as a full account may be found in Hockings (1979 b). By the age of seven or eight children knew how to wash their clothes; but since about 1930 and the requirements of schooling they have usually given their dirty clothes to an obliging sister or mother.

5.21. In summary, we can see that children become enculturated partly by the tales their elders entertain them with, and partly by moving freely around the village, doing things together like working and playing and sleeping. As in all parts of India, small children look to their elder siblings for guidance and leadership. As one proverb expresses this, "If the firstborn is not up to the ears, how can the later-born reach to the horns?" Outdoor group games are popular with the very young, and will be supervised by some old man or woman. In later childhood team sports such as football and a near-lethal form of field hockey are played between village teams. There are also hopscotch games, board games and string figures to while away the time or sharpen the wits of children at various ages. As we will now outline, there is also a series of childhood ceremonies which educate a young person in the values and the structure of his society, and in some cases affect his appearance and attitudes.

Childhood Ceremonies

5.22. This is not the place to offer a detailed ethnographic account of the various life-cycle ceremonies that are performed: they have already been described elsewhere by Natesa Sastri (1892) and

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K. Sithamma (1891-1976), therapist and midwife

[p. 120-A]

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Badaga girls, (ca. 1900)

[P. 120-B]

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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Badaga schoolgirls (1963)

[p. 120-c]

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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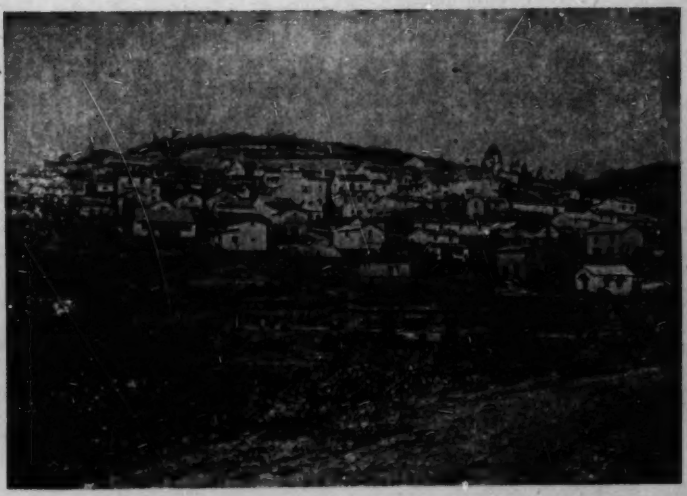

Ka:te:ri, a representative village

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A work-yard in O:ranayi village

requirements were mainly salt, sugar, tobacco and a few trinkets. Cloth might either be obtained at the market or would be brought up into the Nilgiri villages from the Coimbatore Plain by an itinerant Chetti trader (Ward 1821: lxv). The establishment of a bazaar in Ootacamund during the 1820's, and later of others in Coonoor, Wellington, Kotagiri, Ketti and Manjūr, made consumer goods available to the Badagas on a scale and in a variety never before known to them. The desire to acquire some of these new items was presumably one factor in the drive towards greater participation in the cash economy.

Yet the transition took a century to complete. All of the basic requirements for food, goods and services continued to be provided either by the efforts of the Badagas themselves or by their Toda, Kota and Kurumba associates. From the 1820's onwards the Badagas attended the local markets for what they had previously bought in Gundlupet or Kīramaḍai -- salt, sugar, tobacco and trinkets -- but they never sold very much in the markets, and so they rarely had much cash to spend. With the First World War, however, changes in their marketing practices became more apparent. The crucial demand for vegetables to feed the many European troops in India, Burma, Malaya and Ceylon stimulated the change in crops that we have described above (pp. 94-99): Badagas began exporting potatoes and other vegetables to these remote places, and some made handsome profits (Francis 1908: 167).

The cash that came in from this new venture was spent in a great variety of ways. The most obvious was in buying new clothes: in the 1920's men first began to sport European-style shirts and jackets, and in the 1930's women first started to wear colored saris. A few of the more resourceful men invested their incomes in more land or houses, thus laying a stable foundation for future genera-